

## NOTES AND NEWS

### SPUR-WINGED PLOVER IN MARLBOROUGH

Mr Bill Chisholm of Molesworth Station, Marlborough, writes that two Spur-winged Plovers have "taken up residence since January 1973 in the swamp area of the Tardale paddock on Molesworth. Brief sightings were made at Red Gate, some eight miles north east of Tardale, in June 1968."



### SWALLOW AT SEA

We are grateful to Capt John Jenkins for passing on a letter (dated 8 May 1973) from Mr R. H. Smart, Third Officer of the m.v. *Ngahere* (USS Co. of NZ Ltd.) in which he writes: "A common swallow with a white underside, orange upper breast and forked tail was seen off the vessel for five minutes prior to landing on the fore deck. The hands were off at smoko, and it remained with the vessel till they started chipping. Our position was 169°29'E, 34°15'S, Three Kings 088°, 124 miles. The vessel was headed for the islands. The weather had been settled for three days but southerly winds had been experienced in this area for two days prior to the vessel reaching the area . . ."



### RARE BIRDS AT A RARE PRICE!

"A pair of rare stuffed huia were sold last night by auction in Foxton for \$1900. The long-extinct New Zealand native birds, one male and one female, were bought by an Auckland private collector. Bids for the birds started at \$450 each and went up in \$50 lots."

Source: *The Evening Post* [Wellington], 11 August 1973, p. 7.



### BIRDS AND STAMPS

Those ornithologists and/or philatelists who found our notes in the March 1973 issue of *Notornis* of interest will be pleased to know that Mr Arthur Parrott is continuing his series in the Saturday editions of *The Press*, the Christchurch morning paper. In "Stamp Creatures — XV," he surveys the history of myths about the kea's habits and gives much of interest about its characteristic behaviour, concluding with a commentary from J. R. Jackson's "impartial analysis," as Mr Parrott calls it, in *Notornis* 10: 33-38, 1967. Commending this analysis, Mr Parrott says: "I know that many high country sheepmen will not agree with Mr Jackson, but what evidence sheepmen can produce is not, by any stretch of the imagination, impartially obtained or evaluated." Mr Parrott's article is worth asking to see in the newspaper files of your library if you want a good account of this delightful, and much maligned, mountain-inhabiting bird.

In a subsequent issue of *The Press*, Mr Peter Newton, former manager of several high country sheep stations and New Zealand's foremost writer on station life, disputes some of Mr Parrott's statements. One point was that, in contrast to the remark that kea nests